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NEWS RELEASE

Dec. 5, 2001

CORRECTION: Carroll O'Connor's character in the 1949 UM production of "Our Town" was incorrect in the previous version of this release. He played Mr. Webb.

Contact: Sara Birk, graduate assistant, Department of Drama/Dance, 243-4481.

UM DEDICATES 'OUR TOWN' PERFORMANCES TO CARROLL O'CONNOR

MISSOULA--

Upcoming performances of the play "Our Town" at The University of Montana will be dedicated to the late Carroll O'Connor, who began his acting career at UM with performances in "Our Town" and other student productions more than 50 years ago.

UM's Department of Drama/Dance will present Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 11, through Saturday, Dec. 15, in the Montana Theatre of the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center.

Tickets are \$15 for the general public and \$12 for students and senior citizens. They are available at box offices in the PAR/TV Center and the University Center. Box office hours are 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, call 243-4581.

One of the best-known and most timeless tales in American theater, "Our Town" explores love, loss, family and community to provide a vision of what is possible in life. Wilder's play captures key moments in the lives of the residents of Grover's Corners, N.H., at the beginning of the 20th century. It features a unique staging and storytelling style.

O'Connor played Mr. Webb in the 1949 UM production of "Our Town."

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"We are proud to dedicate the performances of 'Our Town' to the memory of Carroll O'Connor," said Sara Birk, drama/dance graduate assistant. "He embodied much of what makes 'Our Town' resonate with audiences of all ages and times. He also was a tremendous champion of the theater and a friend of The University of Montana."

O'Connor died in June after a long career on the Broadway stage and in Hollywood movies and television. The five-time Emmy award winner was best-known for his roles as Archie Bunker in the hit '70s sitcom "All in the Family" and as Chief Bill Gillespie in the prime-time drama "In the Heat of the Night."

In summer 2000, O'Connor returned to UM to teach two sessions of "Writing the Movie," a screenwriting course.

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